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Message Text

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10
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-11 ACDA-05 OMB-01 DHA-02 /094 W
---------- 103529
P R 240809Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7788
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL CASABLANCA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL TANGIER
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION USUN
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON
FOSIF ROTA
COMSIXTHLT

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USCINCEUR AND CINCUSNAVEUR ALSO FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR PBOR MO SP SS AG MR
SUBJECT: SAHARA ROUNDUP

1. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS: NO FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS HAVE COME
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TO LIGHT ON THIRD REPORTED AMGALA CLASH (RABAT 0981) IN WHICH GOM

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CLAIMED TO HAVE WIPED OUT EIGHT TRUCKLOADS ENEMY FORCES. MOROCCAN AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS WERE HELI-LIFTED TO AMGALA FEB 22 AND SHOWN WHAT SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS DESCRIBED AS EVIDENCE OF ALGERIAN PRESENCE AT SECOND AMGALA CLASH, FEB 14 (ALGERIA HAD DENIED ITS FORCES INVOLVED). CAPTURED AMMUNITION, PERSONAL LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS, AND TRAINING MANUALS ALLEGED TO BE ALGERIAN WERE DISPLAYED ALONG WITH DEBRIS OF "MANY ALGERIAN VEHICLES." MILITARY SPOKESMAN AT SITE QUOTED AS SAYING THAT GOM HAD NEVER LOST CONTROL OF AMGALA DURING FEB 14 CLASH. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION HE CLAIMED ALGERIAN POWS TAKEN BUT WOULD NOT REVEAL HOW MANY.

2. GOM CONTINUES TO INSTALL SAHARA CIVIL APPARATUS: AS FEB 28 APPROACHES, DATE ON WHICH SPANISH SCHEDULED TERMINATE SAHARA ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE, GOM MOVING AHEAD TO ASSUME FULL ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL IN NORTHERN SAHARAN PROVINCES. MINISTER OF INTERIOR FLEW TO SMARA FEB 20 TO PARTICIPATE IN ELABORATE SWEARING-IN CEREMONY OF FIRST GOM GOVERNOR THAT PROVINCE. ELSEWHERE, SPANISH TERRITORIAL POLICE TURNED OVER EL AYOUN POLICE BARRACKS TO ROYAL MOROCCAN GENDARMERIE FORCES IN FEB 21 CEREMONY.

3. ARAB LEAGUE MEDIATOR ARRIVES, SEES KING: ARAB LEAGUE SEC GEN RIAD ARRIVED FROM ALGIERS FEB 22, SAW KING IN FEZ FEB 23. NO SUBSTANTIVE DETAILS HAVE AS YET SURFACED.

4. MININFO TO TUNIS: MININFO BENHIMA FLEW TO TUNIS FEB 21 CARRYING MESSAGE FROM KING TO PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA. BENHIMA SAID MESSAGE INFORMED TUNISIAN PRESIDENT OF "EVOLUTION OF SAHARA PROBLEM."

5. FONMIN LARAKI DEPARTS FOR OAU FONMIN MEETING: FONMIN LARAKI DEPARTED FEB 23 FOR ADDIS MEETING, DURING WHICH SUBJECT OAU RECOGNITION OF POLISARIO EXPECTED TO ARISE. SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS RAN AFP STORY QUOTING GABONESE PRESIDENT BONGO PROMISE TO REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY OAU DISCUSSION OF POLISARIO RECOGNITION; SAHARA AFFAIR FINISHED IN HIS OPINION. MEANWHILE USFP'S AL MUHARRIR EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER UPCOMING OAU MEETING IN FEB 21 EDITORIAL. PAPER WROTE THAT MOROCCO'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY SHOULD TAKE PRIORITY OVER PARTICIPATION IN ANY REGIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION. IF SUCH AN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

ORGANIZATION DOES NOT KEEP TO ITS PRINCIPLES, MOROCCO SHOULD HAVE NO MORE TO DO WITH IT.

6. FRENCH FONMIN SENDS MESSAGE ON MISSING FRENCH YOUTHS: ISTIQLAL'S L'OPINION FEB 21 SAID FRENCH FONMIN HAD "VERY RECENTLY" SENT MESSAGE TO FONMIN LARAKI REQUESTING "CLARIFICATIONS" ON FATE OF FIVE FRENCH YOUTHS MISSING SINCE JAN 2.

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7. COMMENT: BRIEF FLAREUPS AND SUBSEQUENT SILENCE OVER THIRD ALLEGED AMGALA CLASH NO DOUBT REFLECTION OF COMPLICATED PUBLIC RELATIONS STRUGGLE GOING ON BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA. MOROCCO'S GAME SEEMS TO BE TO PLAY UP MILITARY SUCCESSES JUST ENOUGH TO GET SOME DOMESTIC MILEAGE BUT NOT SO MUCH AS TO FORCE REBUTTAL -- EITHER ARMED OR VERBAL -- FROM ALGERIANS. THIS IS PROBABLY CARRYOVER FROM KING'S REPORTED ANGER AT MOROCCAN PRESS CROWING OVER CAPTURE OF MAHBES.
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